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A CLASS IN THE WHIPPLE SCHOOL OF ART

THE WHIPPLE SCHOOL OF ART.

Much has been said against the antiquated methods of instruction in art schools and academies. The bane of this is lack of individualization of the student, and undue importance given to the antique cast as the formator of a student's proficiency, rather than the instructor's personal guidance. There is too much "hit and miss" in the usual art course. A chance shot may land or reveal born talent—but the chances are all against it in the usual courses with the average calibre of the faculty that teaches "the young idea how to shoot."

Is it not much better, after a short course and proved proficiency in the technical preliminaries, to force the student to reveal his or her talents by practical work from life or nature, aided by constant supervision and guidance? How many scholars in the average school are not floundering about, looking and experimenting how a thing should be done, who could be placed on the right road at once by a timely hint from the instructor, whose experience serves as a beacon light.

It is not enough to say "this is right" or "this is wrong," but while the work progresses the pitfalls should be pointed out and the right course indicated.

Some time ago I called attention to an ideal evening class by Mucha, and now it is my pleasure to refer to one of the latest organizations for art instruction which can be commended. It is the Whipple School of Art, which the well-known portrait painter, Charles Ayer Whipple, organized in New York about two years ago.

Mr. Whipple is a man who has won his spurs in his profession. He is best known for his portraits of distinguished men and women. That of Major-General Miles is at the West Point Academy, the one of John Sherman in the State Department at Washington, Senator Elkins in the War Department, Gen. Benjamin F. Tracy in the Navy Department. His portraits of President McKinley, of ex-Secretary David R. Francis, of

the former Postmaster-General Wilson are well-known, as is the equestrian portrait of Major-General Granville M. Dodge, which decorates one of the large halls of the Waldorf-Astoria.

With such personal achievements this artist combines the rare talent of imparting what he knows—the ideal teacher's gift. There is a magnetic subtlety in his easel visits which puts the student *en rapport* with the master. The methods above indicated are followed by this instructor. He believes in individualization. And his wide experience has often enabled him to reveal to a student the practical road in which his or her talents would bear most fruit. Thus I can commend this school for beginners or for the most advanced workers.

THE EXHIBITION OF THE AMERICAN WATER COLOR SOCIETY.

All true artist-painters have sought expression for their inspirations in various mediums. They are not satisfied with oil alone. Gérôme handled the mallet and chisel as adroitly as the brush, Michael Angelo was an architect as well as a painter and sculptor, Rembrandt was an expert etcher, all the Dutchmen use water colors; Raffaëlli is a famous pastellist, La Farge's cartoons for window designs are the manifestations of genius—who will say that "the man who paints pictures"—in oil—is the only artist? I have seen one turn out landscapes at a county fair at the rate of one every five minutes—he must have been an artist—and a naughty boy behind me whispers "*nit.*"

Not so at the present exhibition of the American Water Color Society.

There we see how the best artist-painters of the American School find oftentimes the very essence of their cunning expertness most aptly expressed through the so-called "lighter medium." Take, for instance, the aquarelles by Childe Hassam. Howsoever we may sometimes question the successful issue of his methods when using oil, no one can gainsay that the delicious bits of countryside, or city nooks, or "The Children" (No. 573) in the park, are the cleanest, most artistic expressions he ever put forth.

Then look at No. 534, "The Wasp and the Reindeer," by Carleton T. Chapman—one of the finest examples of water-color painting I have seen in many a day. The water is transparent and has movement, the sky is superb, and the whole tone of the painting, with somewhat less of color nuance than the artist generally gives, is highly impressive. It is a masterpiece of aquarelle.

The Evans Prize was deservedly given to No. 512, "Sally," by H. L. Hildebrandt, a beautiful figure piece with charming pose and exquisitely subtle handling. I imagine, however, that if the jury decided to select just such a subject for the prize, it must have swayed somewhat in its decision between this and No. 500, "Days Agone," by W. G. Schneider, which is of equal mastery. It has a delicate, mysterious flavor about it, such as the artist always infuses in his work. The dreamy look and far-away wandering are shown in pose and features with consummate skill. This artist has arrived at considerable knowledge of the resources of this medium, and paints with a very dainty, precise touch and with great sensitiveness to color.

Arthur Schneider, whose exhibition of Morocco water colors is still fresh in mind, shows in No. 556, "The Henna Market, Fez," an aquarelle which is superior to any he showed in his one-man show. It is a picture of great breadth, fulness and animation.